General Assembly

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Fifty-eighth session
Agenda item 117 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/58/508/Add.2)*]

58/186. The right to food

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 57/226 of 18 December 2002, as well as all Commission on Human Rights resolutions in this regard, in particular resolution 2003/25 of 22 April 2003,[1]

Recalling also the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[2] which provides that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for her or his health and well-being, including food,

Recalling further the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[3] in which the fundamental right of every person to be free from hunger is recognized,

Recalling the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition,[4] as well as the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[5]

Bearing in mind the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action,[6]

Bearing in mind also the Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later, adopted in Rome on 13 June 2002,[7]

Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

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[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 3* (E/2003/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[2] Resolution 217 A (III).

[3] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[4] *Report of the World Food Conference, Rome, 5–16 November 1974* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.II.A.3), chap. I.

[5] See resolution 55/2.

[6] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Report of the World Food Summit, 13–17 November 1996* (WFS 96/REP), part one, appendix.

[7] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Report of the World Food Summit: five years later, 10–13 June 2002*, part one, appendix; see also A/57/499, annex.

Recognizing that the problems of hunger and food insecurity have global dimensions and that they are likely to persist and even to increase dramatically in some regions unless urgent, determined and concerted action is taken, given the anticipated increase in the world's population and the stress on natural resources,

Reaffirming that a peaceful, stable and enabling political, social and economic environment, at both the national and the international levels, is the essential foundation that will enable States to give adequate priority to food security and poverty eradication,

Reiterating, as in the Rome Declaration and the Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later, that food should not be used as an instrument of political or economic pressure, and reaffirming in this regard the importance of international cooperation and solidarity, as well as the necessity of refraining from unilateral measures that are not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations and that endanger food security,

Convinced that each State must adopt a strategy consistent with its resources and capacities to achieve its individual goals in implementing the recommendations contained in the Rome Declaration and the World Food Summit Plan of Action and, at the same time, cooperate regionally and internationally in order to organize collective solutions to global issues of food security in a world of increasingly interlinked institutions, societies and economies where coordinated efforts and shared responsibilities are essential,

Stressing the importance of reversing the continuing decline of official development assistance devoted to agriculture, both in real terms and as a share of total official development assistance,

1. *Reaffirms* that hunger constitutes an outrage and a violation of human dignity and therefore requires the adoption of urgent measures at the national, regional and international levels for its elimination;

2. *Also reaffirms* the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, so as to be able to fully develop and maintain their physical and mental capacities;

3. *Considers* it intolerable that there are around 840 million undernourished people in the world, that every seven seconds a child under the age of ten dies, directly or indirectly, of hunger somewhere in the world and that more than 2 billion people worldwide suffer from "hidden hunger" or micronutrient malnutrition;

4. *Expresses its concern* that women are disproportionately affected by hunger, food insecurity and poverty, in part as a result of gender inequality, that in many countries, girls are twice as likely as boys to die from malnutrition and preventable childhood diseases, and that it is estimated that almost twice as many women suffer from malnutrition as men;

5. *Encourages* all States to take steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right to food, including steps to promote the conditions for everyone to be free from hunger and, as soon as possible, to enjoy fully the right to food, and to create and adopt national plans to combat hunger;

6. *Also encourages* all States to take action to address discrimination against women, particularly where it contributes to the malnutrition of women and girls, including measures to ensure the realization of the right to food, and ensuring

that women have equal access to resources, including income, land and water, to enable them to feed themselves;

7. *Stresses* the need to make efforts to mobilize and optimize the allocation and utilization of technical and financial resources from all sources, including external debt relief for developing countries, and to reinforce national actions to implement sustainable food security policies;

8. *Invites once again* all international financial and developmental institutions, as well as the relevant United Nations agencies and funds, to give priority to and provide the necessary funding to realize the aim of halving by 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger, as well as the right to food as set out in the Rome Declaration on World Food Security[6] and the United Nations Millennium Declaration;[5]

9. *Urges* States to give adequate priority in their development strategies and expenditures to the realization of the right to food;

10. *Takes note with appreciation* of the interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the right to food,[8] and commends the Special Rapporteur for his valuable work in the promotion of the right to food;

11. *Supports* the realization of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur as extended by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2003/25;

12. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Special Rapporteur for his effective contribution to the medium-term review of the implementation of the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action[6] through the submission to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights of his recommendations on all aspects of the right to food, and his participation in and contribution to the proceedings of that event;

13. *Encourages* the Special Rapporteur to mainstream a gender perspective in the activities relating to his mandate;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide all the necessary human and financial resources for the effective fulfilment of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur;

15. *Welcomes* the work already done by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in promoting the right to adequate food, in particular its general comment No. 12 (1999) on the right to adequate food (article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), in which the Committee affirmed, inter alia, that the right to adequate food is indivisibly linked to the inherent dignity of the human person and is indispensable for the fulfilment of other human rights enshrined in the International Bill of Human Rights, and is also inseparable from social justice, requiring the adoption of appropriate economic, environmental and social policies, at both the national and the international levels, oriented to the eradication of poverty and the fulfilment of all human rights for all;[9]

16. *Also welcomes* the work of the Intergovernmental Working Group mandated by the Council of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United

[8] See A/58/330.

[9] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 2* and corrigendum (E/2000/22 and Corr.1), annex V, para. 4.

Nations to elaborate, in a period of two years, a set of voluntary guidelines to support the efforts of Member States to achieve the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security;

17. *Further welcomes* the continued cooperation of the High Commissioner, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Special Rapporteur, and encourages them to continue their cooperation in this regard;

18. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to submit a comprehensive report to the Commission on Human Rights at its sixtieth session and an interim report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

19. *Invites* Governments, relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, treaty bodies and non-governmental organizations to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur in the fulfilment of his mandate, inter alia, through the submission of comments and suggestions on ways and means of realizing the right to food;

20. *Decides* to continue the consideration of this matter at its fifty-ninth session under the item entitled "Human rights questions".

77th plenary meeting
22 December 2003